

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## DELEGATION FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

for the relations with the  
UNITED STATES CONGRESS

New York and Washington DC

31 October - 4 November 1977

### Notice to Members

Members will find attached for their information excerpts from the Joint Press Conference held by EC Commissioner BRUNNER, and US Secretary of Energy James SCHLESINGER, on 8 October 1977 at the EC Commission in Brussels (Source: USA Documents).

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMITTEES  
AND INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

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17 October 1977



EXCERPTS FROM THE BRUNNER/SCHLESINGER JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE, 8 OCTOBER 1977  
EC COMMISSION, BRUSSELS

ELPHICK (EC SPOKESMAN) : Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. We welcome today Mr SCHLESINGER, the US Secretary of Energy, with Mr BRUNNER. Mr BRUNNER would like to begin the proceedings by making a short introduction.

BRUNNER : Well, I'm very glad that the Secretary is here. We've had very good talks. We have been as specific as possible. We are both making a considerable energy saving effort. I think it is important that we do this and therefore we wish the Secretary well with his efforts to pass the required legislation. The interests of the Community and the interests of the United States, as I see them, are parallel in this area. If we succeed in making this effort and if we, in the Community, have set ourselves the aim of 15% saving by 1985 we will be credible; we will be credible vis-à-vis the producers of oil, and therefore we will consider this as one element in the price finding (SIC). I think it is absolutely essential that we have successes here. In addition, we have been discussing the necessary effort to reduce the dependency. We have to develop our own sources as much as possible. This includes nuclear energy. We have absolutely to try to continue the effort to develop this tested technology. We know about the problems but nevertheless there is no other way of proceeding and I am very glad that here we see eye to eye. Then we have continued to discuss the overall energy situation and the different sectors including coal and alternative sources of energy. We have agreed upon a series of research and development projects in different areas and I think that there we can supplement bilaterally the effort we are making in common in the research field in the energy agency in Paris. And at last I think we, in the European Community, depend to a large extent upon what successes the energy policy in the United States has. We have to try to see eye to eye on these matters and we have to work on the basis of mutual trust. I think this is essential and it covers two main things in the nuclear field. It covers our trust in the United States as a reliable supplier of uranium; and on the other hand, I think it is important that everybody in the world should know that we have a working safeguard system in Euratom, that we have verification arrangements with the Vienna Agency and that this region is the best inspected region in the world. I think that with this in mind we can continue our cooperation and that this is only a first step. I hope that we will be able to see the Secretary here very often. Thank you very much. Perhaps you would like to say something.

SCIBLESINGER : Well, thank you very much, Mr BRUNNER. It is a pleasure for me to be here in Brussels to discuss with the European Communities our mutual interests in energy. Given the nature of the energy problem we require mutual strengthening. In that regard I was encouraged by the observations made by the Commissioners this morning with regard to the importance of our programme in the United States, not only from the perspective of the United States, but from the perspective of Western Europe and the rest of the industrialized and non-industrialized world. Energy as we see it jointly is the main problem with respect to the revival of economic performance around the world. We did discuss matters of investment, structural changes in the economies of Western Europe and in the United States and other such matters. I should also stress under the rubric of mutual strength and energy that the United States has always stood for strengthening of the bonds in Western Europe, leading ultimately, we believe, to European unity, and in this regard it is necessary because of the energy problem, as well as other political problems, for all of us to pull together. The world will have to go through a cruel transition as it moves away from its dependency on oil and we need to have around the world, amongst the varied nations, a sense of common purpose. To that sense of common purpose the European Communities make a considerable contribution. The major points that were covered in this morning's meeting have been covered by Mr BRUNNER. All of us need to conserve and move towards alternative sources of supply. We recognize that the nuclear programmes in our several nations will grow, need to grow, if we are to maintain economic growth in our respective nations and if we are to avoid either energy shortfall or excessive dependence upon a resource that, in the future, will be dwindling in availability. We, of course, have always endorsed the inspection procedures of Euratom and we continue to endorse those inspection procedures. They are effective procedures. It is true, however, that Congress is considering additional legislation in the non-proliferation area and that some of the criteria will have to be reconsidered in the future, but for the moment I want to underscore the confidence the United States has in the inspection procedures of Euratom and also to underscore that the United States will continue to be a reliable source of supply for enriched uranium.

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LE FIGARO (Jean LECERF) : In all countries there is opposition to the development of nuclear energy. Do you think, on the basis of the studies made in your country, that this development is threatened? Do you believe you can convince the opponents (of nuclear energy) and by what arguments?

SCHLESINGER : There is some opposition to the growth of nuclear power that is based upon steadfast opposition to the concept of nuclear power. I doubt that such people will be convinced by arguments. On the other hand I think that a great part of the society will be convinced of the necessity of providing additional energy in forms that will be available in the future, as opposed to oil which depends upon an availability of foreign exchange, and ultimately an availability of supply, that cannot be forthcoming. Consequently, some may regard nuclear energy, as the President has described it, as a last resort, but we will be down to last resorts. I believe that when the ultimate choice is made between the preservation of the economy, continued economic growth with growth of jobs, production and productivity, that the doubts about nuclear power in all these democracies will be waived.

WASHINGTON POST (Bill DROZDIK) : Has the administration finally accepted the fact that Europe must proceed to build fast breeder reactors, and if so, are any joint arrangements being worked out between the two as to who would control the production of plutonium that would result?

SCHLESINGER : I think that we must keep the matter of time firmly in mind. Both Europe and the United States are in the R and D phase with regard to breeder reactors. The approach to the problem of R and D is somewhat different in Europe and in the United States. There are some differences of view in this matter. But those differences of view have been vastly exaggerated. The issue, it seems to me, has been unduly inflamed. We are proceeding with a major research and development programme in the breeder area. We are spending, as a matter of fact, far more money than is being spent in Europe with regard to the development of breeders. Europe is proceeding with its own R and D in this area. The President has suggested that before we commit ourselves to a breeder era, before we plunge pell-mell into the plutonium economy, that we defer these matters for two purposes. First to see whether the technologies can be improved to reduce the risk of proliferation. I think that those general objectives are shared in Europe. The Europeans will make their own decisions with regard to the pace of their R and D activities. They will pay attention to the urgings of the President of the United States. The President has indicated that other countries will have to make their own decisions. I do not think - going back to the issue of time phasing - that anyone should expect that the breeder era will be on us in the immediate future or that the breeder will make a major contribution to solving our energy problems in the near term, which is the term of most desperate urgency.

BELGA AGENCY (Willy HELIN) : I would like to know whether you discussed at all the issue of nuclear fusion programmes and, in that case, if you did so, how would you judge the possibility of cooperation with Europe at this stage?

SCHLESINGER : It was touched on very briefly. Staffs will be meeting with respect to R and D cooperation on fusion as well as in other areas, but the conversations were primarily a brief allusion rather than in detail.

BRUNNER : Let me volunteer here a comment. It's easier than on the breeder. The leading organization in this field is the Energy Agency in Paris, and there the United States and the European Community have a good area of cooperation. You know that we are still trying to make one important project possible, which is the JET, and that is becoming a matter of great, great urgency. There are similar developments going on in the United States in Princeton. I think that here, although we are not directly cooperating in one project, this parallelism of research is meaningful, perhaps not for the immediate future, but for the future. .

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MCGRAWHILL (Marion BYWATER) : While it might be possible that by the time fast breeders become commercial, America and the EEC will see eye to eye on the approach to fast breeder technology, did you discuss what seems to be fundamental differences in the approach to reprocessing which is something which is here and now in Europe at the moment?

SCHLESINGER : We discussed the matter of reprocessing to some extent, including certain difficulties that the American approach to the problem of reprocessing may imply for the European Communities and for the Member nations. That was discussed in addition at some length in Bonn yesterday. We also discussed measures, approaches, that might ease the difficulties, although no decisions were taken in that regard. Let me say, however, with regard to the issue of reprocessing, that it is our judgment that on technical grounds, on technical grounds, that reprocessing can be deferred for as much as a decade with no substantial costs. However, there are political or legal problems in certain countries that must be faced up to as well as these technical problems. And I believe that these political and legal problems will be faced with a spirit of mutual trust and a desire to ease problems across the board; and that the outcome, I would hope, would be a satisfactory one.

BRUNNER : I could add to this that I welcome the opportunity to be able to point out to the Secretary the conditions in which we operate in Europe in this area. I pointed out that the problems of the nuclear cycle and of the mastering of the nuclear cycle are very much in the public mind; that in many countries in Europe the development of nuclear energy is, from the point of view of the public, dependent on progress in this area of mastering the cycle. And this includes the development of the reprocessing technology. We have here, as the Secretary has pointed out, in Europe certain political conditions, conditions of public opinion, which require special attention. We are making a considerable research effort in the field of nuclear waste management. I hope we will be able, as time goes by, to develop reprocessing technology in such a way that some of the problems connected with it are being overcome. We live here in Europe in different geographic and geological conditions and for us the problem of intermediate waste disposal is more acute and more difficult to solve. But we are now, both the United States and many other countries, at the beginning of a common effort to study the nuclear fuel cycle. I think this conference which will begin as a preliminary conference in Washington on 19 October, will offer new avenues, and we are looking forward to cooperating with the United States in this field.

DIE ZEIT (Hans Hagen BREMER) : You say that the safeguard system of Euratom has been recognized as effective by the United States Government. But what improvements does Congress wish to have in this field?

SCHLESINGER : The question of Euratom controls: over the years the United States has supported the special procedures that have applied to Euratom. We have been pleased by the negotiations between Euratom and IAEA which have been successful and we will continue to support those types of inspection procedures. Congressional legislation would suggest the renegotiation of our agreements with Euratom and those renegotiations would, according to the legislation, require prior consent by the United States prior to the reprocessing of US supplied fuel. For the next eighteen months, the President has the right to waive such requirements, and I would trust once again, through a spirit of cooperation, that an outcome will be arrived at that would be satisfactory to all parties.

DELO AGENCY (Boris VERDEC) : In a United Nations speech, Henri SIMONET adopted a very different position from the American position regarding the transfer of nuclear technology to third countries. Have you today managed to narrow the gap between your positions?

SCHLESINGER : That is a matter that was not discussed today. I think that the American position is quite clear, that the transfer of technology should be under full scope safeguards.

BRUNNER : If I may add a comment, I think lately there has been some progress in this area, and in particular in the London Club of Suppliers. Five members of the European Community participate in these talks, and I think this understanding is a valuable one.

EUROPEAN REPORT (Chris REDMAN) : Am I to understand then that the United States would sanction exports of sensitive nuclear technology by France and Germany to Pakistan and Brazil; and if not, what the criteria would be for recognizing that a country is civilized enough or developed enough to have sensitive technology?

SCHLESINGER : The precise details in that area are the responsibility of the Department of State. Generally speaking, the criteria are that the country that is a recipient must have full scope safeguards and must adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Those are the criteria. Whether you regard them as a matter of civilization or not is a judgment on your part.

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